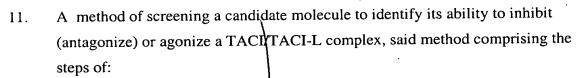
What is claimed:

- 1. A method of screening a candidate molecule to identify its ability to inhibit or prevent the dissociation of a TACI/TACI-L complex, said method comprising the steps of:
 - a. forming said TACI/TACI-L complex or a TACI/TACI-L fragment complex in the absence of said candidate molecule;
 - b. adding said candidate molecule to a medium containing said TACI/TACI-L complex or said TACI/TACI-L fragment complex;
 - c. changing the conditions of said medium so that, but for the presence of said candidate molecule, said TACI or TACI fragments, would be released from the complex;
 - d. measuring the concentration of free or bound said TACI, TACI-L or fragments thereof; and
 - e. determining the dissociation constant of said TACI/TACI-L complex or said TACI/TACI-L fragment complex and comparing said constant to a dissociation constant of a TACI/TACI-L complex or TACI/TACI-L fragment complex measured in a medium not containing the candidate molecule.
- 2. A method of screening a candidate molecule to identify its ability to inhibit a TACI/TACI-L complex, said method comprising the steps of:
 - a. adding TACI to a medium containing TACI-L and said candidate molecule, wherein one of either said TACI or said TACI-L is labeled and the other is bound;
 - b. measuring the level of signal produced; and
 - c. comparing the level of signal produced in step (b) to the level of signal produced by a TACI/TACI-L complex or TACI/TACI-L fragment complex formed with said labeled TACI or TACI-L in the absence of said candidate molecule;

wherein diminished levels of signal produced in step (b) indicate that said candidate molecule inhibited said TACI/TACI-L complex.

- 3. A method of screening a candidate molecule to identify its ability to mimic the biological activity of the TACI/TACI-L complex, said method comprising the steps of:
 - a. determining if said candidate molecule binds to TACI, TACI-L or fragments thereof:
 - b. adding said candidate molecule to a biological assay to determine its biological effects; and
 - c. comparing said biological effects of said candidate molecule with the biological effects of said TACI/TACI-L complex or a TACI/TACI-L fragment complex.
- 4. A method of screening a candidate molecule to identify its ability to be useful in the treatment of diseases modulated by the TACI/TACI-L complex, said method comprising the steps of:
 - a. forming said TACI/TACI-L complex or a TACI/TACI-L fragment complex in the absence of said candidate molecule;
 - b. adding said candidate molecule to a medium containing said TACI/TACI-L complex or said TACI/TACI-L fragment complex;
 - c. changing the conditions of said medium so that, but for the presence of said candidate molecule, said TACI or TACI fragments, would be released from said TACI/TACI-L complex or said TACI/TACI-L fragment complex;
 - d. measuring the concentration of free or bound said TACI, TACI-L or fragments thereof; and
 - e. determining the dissociation constant of said TACI/TACI-L complex or said TACI/TACI-L fragment complex and comparing said constant to a dissociation constant of a TACI/TACI-L complex or TACI/TACI-L fragment complex measured in a medium not containing the candidate molecule.
- 5. A method of screening a candidate molecule to identify its ability to be useful in the treatment of diseases modulated by the TACI/TACI-L complex, said method comprising the steps of:

- a. adding TACI to a medium containing TACI-L and said candidate molecule, wherein one of either said TACI or said TACI-L is labeled and the other is bound;
- b. measuring the level of signal produced; and
- c. comparing the level of signal produced in step (b) to the level of signal produced by a TACI/TACI-L complex or TACI/TACI-L fragment complex formed with said labeled TACI or TACI-L in the absence of said candidate molecule.
- 6. A method of screening a candidate molecule to identify its ability to be useful in the treatment of diseases modulated by the TACI/TACI-L complex, said method comprising the steps of:
 - a. determining if said candidate molecule binds to TACI or TACI-L;
 - b. adding said candidate molecule to a biological assay to determine its biological effects; and
 - c. comparing the biological effects of said candidate molecule with the biological effects of said TACI/TACI-L complex or a TACI/TACI-L fragment complex.
- 7. The method of any one of dalms 1 through 6 in which the candidate molecule is selected from a group consisting of a small molecule, antibody, or peptide.
- 8. The method of claims 1, 3, 4 or 6, in which either TACI or TACI-L, or fragments thereof, is labeled.
- 9. The method of any one of claims 1 through 6, in which at least one fragment of said TACI/TACI-L fragment complex is soluble.
- 10. The method of any one of claims 1 through 6, in which said TACI/TACI-L complex is comprised of the sequence of SEQ. ID. NO.:2 and the sequence of SEQ. ID. NO.:4.



- (a) adding said candidate molecule to a medium which contains cells expressing TACI and cells expressing TACI-L;
- (b) changing the conditions of said medium so that, but for the presence of said candidate molecule, said TACI/TACI-L complex and/or a TACI/TACI-L fragment complex would be formed;
- (c) determining the level of biological activity of said TACI/TACI-L complex and/or said TACI/TACI-fragment complex formed in said medium; and
- (d) comparing the level of biological activity of step (c) with the level of biological activity that occurs in said medium in the absence of said candidate molecule.
- 12. An antagonist as identified by the method of claim 11.
- 13. An agonist as identified by the method of claim 11.
- 14. A method of modulating an intracellular signaling cascade mediated by the TACI/TACI-L complex in a mammal comprising administering to such a mammal an effective amount of an agonist or an antagonist of the TACI/TACI-L complex.